



**OFFICE OF THE LT. GOVERNOR  
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**Additional Indiana Counties are Declared Natural Disaster Areas**  
*Farmers in 80 counties now qualify for assistance*

Lt. Governor Becky Skillman, the state's secretary of agriculture, announced today that 14 additional counties in Indiana have been declared primary natural disaster areas by the U.S. Department of Agriculture due to losses caused by extreme drought.

Also, 11 new contiguous counties have been declared natural disaster areas. Farm operations in 80 counties now qualify for low interest emergency loans through USDA's Farm Service Agency.

"As drought spreads havoc, particularly for those in our agriculture sector who provide the basics, we continue to work with our partners and others to minimize the impact," Lt. Governor Becky Skillman said.

Recent changes made by the USDA have streamlined the disaster declaration process. Counties that have been at a certain level of drought for eight consecutive weeks, automatically qualify for disaster designation. Counties that border primary natural disaster counties also qualify for assistance.

Officials from the Indiana State Department of Agriculture continue to monitor counties that have not yet received disaster designation. Requests can be made to USDA for any counties that should receive natural disaster status.

Farmers in eligible counties have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for low interest loans. FSA will consider each loan application. Additional resources to help farmers deal with drought may be found at a state website, [www.in.gov/isda/2533.htm](http://www.in.gov/isda/2533.htm).

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*Lt. Governor Becky Skillman oversees the Office of Community and Rural Affairs, the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, the Office of Energy Development, the Office of Tourism Development, and the State Department of Agriculture.*

*To receive email updates from Lt. Governor Skillman, sign up at [www.in.gov/lg/2941.htm](http://www.in.gov/lg/2941.htm).*